

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8, 10-13, and 15-38 are currently pending. Claims 1, 12, and 13 have been amended; Claims 9 and 14 have been canceled without prejudice; and Claims 15-38 have been added by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-5, 12/1-12/5, 13/1-13/5, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over PCT Application No. WO 99/42950 to Xu (hereinafter “the ‘950 patent”) in view of Japanese Application No. JP 05-130986 to Sata (hereinafter “the ‘986 patent”); Claims 6, 10, 11, 12/6, 12/10, 12/11, 13/6, 13/10, and 13/11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘950 and ‘986 patents, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,289,374 to Doi et al. (hereinafter “the ‘374 patent”); and Claims 7-9, 12/7-12/9, and 13/7-13/9 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Based on the indicated allowability of dependent Claim 9, Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations recited in Claim 9. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 (and dependent Claims 2-4) under 35 U.S.C. §103 is rendered moot by the present amendment to Claim 1. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of dependent Claims 6, 10, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are rendered moot by the present amendment to Claim 1.

In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 9 and 14 are rendered moot by the present cancellation of those claims.

Further, Applicants note that Claims 12 and 13, which are directed to a computer readable medium and a system, respectively, have been rewritten to be independent claims. In addition, Claims 12 and 13 have been amended in a manner analogous to the amendment

to independent Claim 1. Accordingly, based on the indicated allowability of dependent Claim 9, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 12 and 13 patentably define over the cited references and are in condition for formal allowance.

The present amendment also sets forth new Claims 15-38 for examination on the merits. New Claims 15-23 correspond to original Claims 12/2-12/8, 12/10, and 12/11, respectively, but have been rewritten to depend from new independent Claim 12. Moreover, new Claims 24-32 correspond to original Claims 13/2-13/8, 13/10, and 13/11, respectively, but have been rewritten to depend from new independent Claim 13. Accordingly, new Claims 15-32 are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter. Moreover, based on the asserted allowability of Claims 12 and 13, Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 15-32 are in condition for allowance.

New independent Claims 33-38 recite the limitations recited in allowed dependent Claims 7 and 8 for each of the method, system, and computer recordable medium claims. For example, new Claim 33 recites the limitations recited in original Claims 1, 5, and 7, while new Claim 34 recites the limitations recited in original Claims 1, 5, and 8. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 33-38 are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter. Further, based on the indication allowability of dependent Claims 7 and 8, Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 33-38 are in condition for formal allowance.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 12, 13, and 33-38 are in condition for formal allowance.

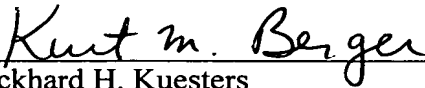
Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejections are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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